

SUMMARY OF THE 5th INTERMODAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

The Intermodal Advisory Council met on Wednesday, March 26, 2003 from 9:00-12:00 in the 3rd floor classroom at LDOTD headquarters, Baton Rouge.

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to review comments regarding the Draft Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan received at the nine regional public meetings and from the formal 45-day public review period (occurring February 3 – March 21, 2003). The regional public meetings took place in:

- Lafayette
- Pineville
- Mandeville
- Metairie
- Lake Charles
- Gray/Houma
- Baton Rouge
- Monroe
- Shreveport

Meeting Attendees

The following persons attended the meeting:

Advisory Council Members/Representatives

Elton Pody, Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce
Roy Miller, Shreveport Regional Airport
Tony Tramel, Lafayette Consolidated Government
Hank Lauricella, Lauricella Land Company
Revis Ortique, New Orleans Aviation Board
Huey Dugas, Capital Region Planning Commission
Carmack Blackmon, Louisiana Railroads
Anthony Marino, Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport
Dot McConnell, Ports Association of Louisiana
Glenn Guillot, Southeastern Motor Freight

Non-Member DOTD Staff

Dan Broussard, DOTD
Eric Kalivoda, DOTD

Consultant Team Member(s)

Butch Babineaux, WSA

Others

Karen Parsons, Regional Planning Commission
Ravikumar, Capital Region Planning Commission
Chris Petro, NLCOE
Todd Jones, Rubicon, Inc.
Sean Hunter, L.A.N.O. International Airport
Courtney Thornton, LANDIA

Meeting Summary

Senator Hank Lauricella, Chair of the Intermodal Advisory Council, called the meeting to order, commenting on how the Draft Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan represents a paradigm shift in how transportation infrastructure is planned and implemented in Louisiana. Senator Lauricella noted that in the past, transportation planning and project development was largely done through informal “arrangements” and back-of-the-envelope calculations. Senator Lauricella went on to describe how the current Draft Plan makes a clean break from this past, and the degree to which the public (both professional and general) was included, as well as the technical soundness of the plan, should be thought of as the beginning of a new day regarding transportation planning in Louisiana.

Dr. Eric Kalivoda, LDOTD, then began a summary presentation of oral and written comments received from the nine regional meetings. During this summary, a final tabulation of meeting attendance was presented. General oral comments received during the meetings were described, as were more detailed comments regarding particular aspects of specific megaprojects proposed in the Draft Plan. Many written comments also concerned details of proposed megaprojects.

Comments regarding modes other than roadways, such as those concerning transit and pedestrian / bicycle issues, were also detailed. A common concern regarding the pedestrian and bicycle aspects of the plan was that the modes should be treated in a distinct section of the plan, as other modes are.

Comments received during the 3/25 meeting of the Freight Rail Advisory Council were also presented to the Intermodal Advisory Council for consideration.

Butch Babineaux, WSA, then presented a brief recap of comments received during the nine regional meetings.

Dale Janik, WSA, then led a discussion regarding recommendations regarding how DOTD staff and consultant team members should incorporate comments received. Each comment was reviewed in light of a recommendation to the IAC to “agree” or “disagree” with the comment, along with a brief explanation of the rationale behind the recommendation. Mr. Janik noted that the development of these recommendations is part of the process by which federal regulations, mandating that all public comment received during the comment period, must be considered.

It was noted regarding a comment concerning the provision of “environmentally safe” highway improvements that, in addition to following all federal NEPA procedures, LDOTD has its own environmental policy that spells out how projects are to be reviewed in this context.

Glenn Guillot reinforced the comment received that specific examples should be provided of how the additional annual \$250 million called for in Scenario 2 of the plan could be generated.

Jim Harvey, New Orleans RPC, noted that the list of projects described as “Typical Projects to be Funded Under an Intermodal Access Program” should be renamed. These projects are now to be known as “Preliminary List of High-Priority Intermodal Access Projects.”

Several comments related to the desire of an individual to have a given megaproject moved to a different priority list. In the majority of these instances, it was decided that the IAC would not take a position to “agree” or “disagree” with the project, but to note that while the project may be a good one, prescribed funding constraints within the plan keep its priority from being changed.

In response to the comments: “Break out I-10 from I-110 to I-12 (LSTP-020g) to priority A and B” and “Break out the Baton Rouge North Bypass from I-10 to I-12 (LSTP-051) to priority A and B” it was noted that the entire project corridor must be examined during the planning process – any staged construction of these projects will be considered during the design process.

In response to the comment: “Identify transit needs to maintain and increase service levels,” it was noted that urban transit needs are more appropriately addressed through the metropolitan transportation planning process.

In response to the comment: “DOTD should take the lead to initiate multiple partnerships to develop a comprehensive policy for cycling,” it was noted that incorporating this comment into the plan, the phrase “multiple partnerships” should be more clearly defined.

In response to the comment: “Mainstream bicycle / pedestrian considerations into the DOTD planning and design process,” it was noted that the word “mainstream” should be replaced by the phrase “routine accommodation.”

It was requested that the following language be included in the final plan: “Continue financial support of the Southern Rapid Rail Coalition (SRRC) program and projects.” A request was made that the final plan include language to dedicate \$70,000 / year for the SRRC, so that the current annual funding request that the organization must submit can be alleviated.

A request was made to include the following statement in the final plan document: “To the extent possible, partner with the Federal Railroad Administration to develop MAGLEV technologies within the state.